
The United States Navy on the World Wide Web
A service of the Navy Office of Information, Washington DC
send feedback/questions to comments@chinfo.navy.mil
The United States Navy web site is found on the Internet at
<http://www.navy.mil>

Navy & Marine Corps Medical News
#03-08
March 7, 2003

Navy Medicine: Plan Now for Tomorrow's Emergency
Navy Medicine Helps Work the Bugs Out
Telemedicine Connects Navy Doc Around the Fleet
Pearl Harbor Clinic Helps Save Time, Dollars;
Improves Readiness
Comfort Docs Operate On Sealift Mariner
TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy Begins
HealthWatch: Make a Plan, Make a Kit, Be Informed Are
Keys to Emergency Planning
-usn-

Navy Medicine: Plan Now for Tomorrow's Emergency
By Jan Davis, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
WASHINGTON - The recent risk of attack increase by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security from yellow, elevated, to orange, high, sent many scurrying to home improvement stores for duct tape and plastic sheeting. Navy Medicine's Director of Homeland Security, Rear Adm. Philip VanLandingham, Medical Service Corps, emphasizes that focusing only on this aspect of emergency planning may not be the best way for you and your family to prepare. Rather, individuals and families are better served by taking an "all hazards" approach to planning for either man-made or natural disasters.

"Since Sept. 11, Navy Medicine, other government agencies, and public and private organizations across America have aggressively prepared for emergencies, including attacks by biological agents, chemicals or explosions, to help keep people safe," said VanLandingham. "But we can't do it alone."

One of Navy Medicine's Office of Homeland Security's primary missions is to help Navy medical facilities with their emergency planning so every person knows their role. The office has been so successful that they're now on demand at non-Navy facilities such as neighboring first responder organizations and civilian medical facilities. But VanLandingham said organizations' planning and actions aren't enough. Sailors, Marines and their families need to make their own emergency action plan.

"In an emergency, communication, prior planning, practice, and teamwork are key to ensuring all the right

actions are taken when the time comes," said VanLandingham. "That's true whether it's for an organization, an individual or a family."

VanLandingham recommends doing some homework before you make your plan. Sometimes, what might seem like the obvious action to take in an emergency might not be the right thing after all. Cmdr. Harry "Chip" Taylor, Medical Corps, head of medical plans and policy for Navy Medicine's Office of Homeland Security, said that when he began working on his family's plan, his first thought was that he'd immediately go pick up his children at school.

"But I found out that the school's plan in the event of a Sept. 11-like attack was to get the kids inside and keep them there until the immediate danger passes," said Taylor. "I would have showed up at the school only to find I could not take them home at that time."

Taylor said that even though his job is helping Navy Medicine organizations plan for emergencies, he found helpful information for his family emergency plan on the new U.S. Department of Homeland Security-sponsored Ready.Gov website, www.ready.gov.

"This is one of the best sites to obtain information on basic planning," said VanLandingham. "It preaches the 'make a kit, make a plan, be informed' guidelines that work for almost every emergency, whether it's a hurricane, a bad snowstorm like the one we recently had here in Washington, or a terrorist attack."

Other useful websites for help in making your individual or family emergency plan are the Federal Emergency Management Agency, www.fema.gov, and the American Red Cross, www.redcross.org.

"My advice to Navy and Marine Corps individuals and families is not only to make a plan, but to practice it and renew it every six months or so," said VanLandingham.

-usn-

Navy Medicine Helps Work the Bugs Out
By Marine Sgt. David Christian, 1st Force Service Support Group

CAMP IWO JIMA - A tiny mosquito bite could transmit a disease such as malaria to an unsuspecting victim and possibly lead to death. One of the most powerful weapons to combat this danger is the preventive medicine Sailors from the 1st Force Service Support Group, who use their knowledge of entomology to keep service members healthy while in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The specialists focus on pest control, education and surveillance to accomplish their mission of ensuring troop vigor. The main weapon in their arsenal is insecticide - lethal to insects but safe for humans when

used correctly. The most effective technique is to spray uniforms and mosquito netting with permethrin. Once uniforms are treated with the insecticide, it binds to the fabric and will not wash out. They have sprayed thousands of uniforms and netting for Marines, Sailors and soldiers over the past several months.

"When a mosquito or tick lands on the treated uniform, it will pick up tiny particles of the insecticide and die in about 24 hours," said Lt. Pete Obenauer, Medical Service Corps, an entomologist with 1st FSSG.

In a camp setting, another combative priority is to rid the area of flies. A simple solution is to sprinkle treated fly bait within the compound. The attracted flies feed and die in minutes.

Education is the second line of defense. The preventive medicine team explain what to look for, what to avoid and how to battle common pests such as flies, ticks, mosquitoes, spiders, rats, and snakes.

"My recommendation to Marines and Sailors is to wear bug repellent and use your mosquito netting," said Obenauer. "Since most mosquitoes feed at night, if you have your netting up you significantly reduce your chances of getting bit."

Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Maryjane Guest, a preventive medicine technician, has additional advice.

"Don't eat in the tents because the food attracts rats and the rats attract snakes."

The third line of defense is ongoing surveillance. The team monitors pests by collecting insects from various locations to see if any are carrying diseases.

Obenauer said service members would likely suffer greatly without modern preventive medicine's attack on pests.

"During World War II, many Marines and soldiers came down with malaria, which incapacitated one of every three Marines," he said. "We're not on the front line fighting the bullets, but I like to think that we're fighting insects so we can keep the forces healthy."

-usn-

Telemedicine Connects Navy Doc Around the Fleet
By Journalist 2nd Class Ellen Maurer, USNS Comfort

ABOARD USNS COMFORT, At Sea - Navy radiologist Lt. Cmdr. Roy Rice, Medical Corps, is helping set up a new piece of equipment that could increase his patient population from hundreds to thousands of Sailors and Marines stationed all over the world. When it's up and ready, Rice can help patients as far away as Iceland from his office aboard USNS Comfort (T-AH 20).

The technology, called RADWORKS, is a computerized communication system. It is just one of several parts to Comfort's new telemedicine program, designed to keep Navy Medicine on the cutting edge of patient care.

Combining telemedicine's technology of interlinked secure internet connectivity with existing resources such as phones, FAX machines and email, RADWORKS gives Comfort's medical experts the ability to send and receive patient consultations to and from other providers around the fleet and medical facilities ashore.

"It's an invaluable tool for the deployed physician to have real-time radiology consults," said Rice, referring to his ability to receive digital X-rays taken aboard other ships and at fleet hospitals, and converse with on-location health care providers about their medical findings. "This is really the next generation of how we do business."

Comfort, which was designed to bring world-class medical health care to the sick and wounded at sea, has taken its mission of patient care one step further with telemedicine. The ship's on board medical experts are now able to be virtually anywhere and everywhere their medical opinion is needed.

Lt. David Felton, Nurse Corps, a crewmember aboard Comfort, says he can appreciate the advances technology has created for patient care. Not only is Felton the chief information officer for the Medical Treatment Facility aboard Comfort and the service chief for e-health at the National Naval Medical Center (NNMC) Bethesda, Md., but he's also a nurse who worked in emergency medicine for years before combining his love of patient care and computers.

"In the event that Comfort is staffed for a smaller contingency, (we) can leverage our telemedicine capabilities for consultations and evaluations from specialty providers who may be geographically distant from us," said Felton. "The beauty of telemedicine is the ability to utilize the technologies to bridge time and distance in the support of direct patient care."

Felton adds that telemedicine, overall, is becoming quite common Navy-wide. The main Navy player is still NNMC, which provides telemedicine and teleradiology support to several large-deck Navy ships, overseas shore-based facilities, remotely located stateside medical facilities and other units deployed around the world.

However, he said, Comfort could very well be used just as extensively as NNMC in a wartime situation.

"Many of NNMC's specialists deploy aboard Comfort," said Felton. "With telemedicine now available aboard the ship, those same experts will be able to continue serving patients fleetwide, regardless of where this ship goes."

-usn-

Pearl Harbor Clinic Helps Save Time, Dollars; Improves Readiness

By Lt.(j.g.). Ann-Marie A. Noad, Medical Service Corps,
Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor, Hawaii

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii - Naval Medical Clinic Pearl Harbor's partnership with the Chief of Naval Education and Training to train respirator program managers is saving time and money, and improving the readiness, all thanks to a special program that is one-of-a-kind for a Bureau of Medicine and Surgery activity.

Through the Pearl Harbor Local Training Authority, a part of CNET, the Pearl Harbor clinic's industrial hygiene staff has been certified to present the only Navy Occupational Safety and Health course offered outside the NAVOSH Training Center. The two-day course, "Respiratory Program Manager A-AJ-0082," is required for surface ship's respiratory program managers. Offering the course at the Pearl Harbor clinic saves travel time and costs, and prevents the lost productivity that results when Sailors must be sent to the mainland for training.

"We've trained representatives from eight commands in the first two classes," said Pearl Harbor Clinic's Blake Watanabe, the course's certified instructor and manager. He said the course will be offered four times a year to ensure operational units will get the respiratory program managers they need.

Other courses are also in the works. The clinic will host the Navy Environmental Health Center's eight-day "Industrial Hygiene Techniques B-322-2306," which generally is taught three or four times a year on the east coast. Bringing it to Pearl Harbor saves dollars and time for the active duty and civilian safety specialists who monitor health-hazardous stressors, such as noise, asbestos and heat, in the work environment. Certified industrial hygienists from the clinic plan on teaching this course, too, once it's been established. They hope to take the course to facilities in Japan and other areas of the Western Pacific where there's been a long-standing training need.

-usn-

Comfort Docs Operate On Sealift Mariner

By Journalist 2nd Class Ellen Maurer, USNS Comfort

ABOARD USNS COMFORT - Operating room staff members aboard Navy hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) performed surgery recently on a Comfort mariner to correct a small bowel obstruction, a condition that could have eventually led to serious complications or even death.

Joe Shepherd, 66, is a civilian cook who has worked for the Military Sealift Command for nearly 30 years.

According to his doctor, Cmdr. Donald Bennett, Medical Corps, Shepherd is doing very well after the two and a half hour surgery. He was released from Comfort's Medical Treatment Facility aboard Comfort shortly after

the surgery and is expected to be fully recovered in about four to six weeks.

Shepherd said he feels great, and is grateful, for the care he's received aboard Comfort.

"I am pretty sure that if I'd been on another ship that wasn't actually a hospital, like this, I might have been in trouble," Shepherd added. "As it is, though, they did a great job. From the corpsmen to the nurses and the doctors, I think they're all just great."

-usn-

TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy Begins From the TRICARE Management Activity

FALLS CHURCH, Va. - Starting March 1, 2003, the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy (TMOP) program replaced the National Mail Order Pharmacy (NMOP) program as the prescription mail order pharmacy benefit for Department of Defense (DoD) Military Health System beneficiaries. The TRICARE pharmacy benefit and co-payments remain the same - only the program name and benefit manager have changed.

Express Scripts Inc., a leading benefit prescription manager in the United States, is the new TMOP benefit manager. To be eligible for the new pharmacy benefit, the sponsor and family member must both be enrolled and eligible in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Members of the National Guard and Reserve and their family members are also eligible for TMOP if the sponsor is on federal (Title 10 or Title 32) active duty orders for more than 30 days and their DEERS information is up-to-date. TRICARE eligibility for sponsors and family members is effective on the date of activation on the sponsors' orders.

"Under TRICARE, beneficiaries have three options for filling their prescriptions. They can use a military treatment facility, a TRICARE retail network pharmacy, or TMOP," said Army Col. William Davies, director of DoD Pharmacy programs.

Prescription medications filled under TMOP cost \$3 for a 90-day supply for generic medications, and \$9 for a 90-day supply for most brand-name medications. Prescriptions filled using a retail network pharmacy cost \$3 for a 30-day generic supply and \$9 for a 30-day supply for most brand-name medications.

"We want beneficiaries who have long-term medication needs to consider using the mail order program. It provides up to a 90-day supply of most medications for a single co-payment, whereas they only receive a 30-day supply for a single co-payment in the retail network pharmacy system," Davies said.

Before a prescription can be filled, each beneficiary must complete a one-time Express Scripts Registration Form and return it to Express Scripts for

processing. The registration form is available online at www.express-scripts.com, or may be picked up at any military treatment facility or regional TRICARE Service Center.

The TMOP registration form, new prescription and payment (by credit card, check or money order) should be returned to the address provided on the registration form. The beneficiary's name; the sponsor's Social Security number, address, and telephone number; and the provider's name, address and telephone should be clearly written on each prescription submitted. Express Scripts can mail prescriptions to any U. S. postal address or APO/FPO address (except a private foreign address) overseas. Sponsors and family members assigned to an embassy without an APO/FPO address must use their official Washington, D.C., embassy address to receive prescription medications. Prescriptions for beneficiaries residing overseas must be prescribed by providers who are licensed to practice in the U.S.

Deliveries for locations within the U.S. require approximately 5 to 7 days to process. Additional time may be required for prescription medications delivered overseas.

Beneficiaries covered by a pharmacy benefit under other health insurance (OHI) may only use TMOP if their OHI does not cover the medication they need, or if the pharmacy benefit under the OHI plan has been exhausted. If the medication required is covered under TMOP, Express Scripts will fill the prescription as long as the beneficiary has no other pharmacy benefit available or until the beneficiary's pharmacy benefit is renewed under the OHI.

Beneficiaries may check the status of their new or refill prescription orders anytime at www.express-scripts.com or by calling toll free, 866 DoD-TMOP ((866) 363-8667). Active duty sponsors may verify or update DEERS information for themselves or their family members by contacting or visiting their local military identification (ID) card issuing facility. Sponsors may locate the nearest military personnel office or ID card facility on the DEERS Web site at www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl/ to verify DEERS eligibility. Sponsors may also verify DEERS eligibility by calling DEERS toll free at (800)-538-9552.

-usn-

HealthWatch: Make a Plan, Make a Kit, Be Informed Are
Keys to Emergency Preparedness

By Jan Davis, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

WASHINGTON - The devastating Sept. 11 terrorist attacks have prompted new emphasis on emergency planning by communities, businesses and organizations. It has even generated the establishment of a new Cabinet-level department that focuses on protecting Americans against

terrorist attacks.

According to Rear Adm. Philip VanLandingham, Medical Service Corps, director of Navy Medicine's Office of Homeland Security, as good as federal, state and local governments and organizations are at planning for emergencies and for keeping people safe, they can't do it alone.

"Sailors, Marines and their families must make their own personal emergency action plans so they know what to do, whether for a terrorist attack, a hurricane or a fire," said VanLandingham. "It's wise to plan ahead for emergencies, make an emergency kit with items such as food and water, and ensure you're informed on what to do in different kinds of disasters."

Make a Plan

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Ready.Gov website, www.ready.gov, says that it's important to think about the places where you and your family spend time - your command, school, work, gym, daycare - and know about their emergency plans. Find out how they will communicate with families and others during an emergency. Then create your own plan.

The American Red Cross, www.redcross.org, has information for individuals and families' emergency planning based on the Homeland Security Advisory System. Their brochure, "Your Family Disaster Plan," available on their website, is a basic "how to" on putting together a plan.

Other planning steps include:

- Know how to contact each other. If local telephone systems are down, it may be easier to contact out of town friends or family members who can then communicate among the separated family members. Family members should carry telephone numbers, a cell phone, a pre-paid calling card or change for a pay telephone.

- Know how and where to get emergency information. Find out what kinds of disasters are most likely to occur in your area and how you will be notified. One common method is emergency radio or TV broadcast. Some communities use special sirens. Military installations may have emergency workers go door to door.

- Talk to your neighbors to see how you can collaborate in an emergency.

Make a Kit

The kit should include, as a minimum:

- Have a three-day supply of non-perishable food and water (one gallon per person per day) as well as a can opener and disposable plates and cutlery.

- One change of clothing and footwear per person and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.

- Stock a first aid kit, and include a supply of your prescription medications. Don't forget to rotate the medicine out before it expires. Consider taking a first aid class.

- A battery-operated radio, extra batteries, flashlight, and other common-sense articles are also good to include.

- Don't forget sanitation supplies and special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.

For additional recommendations on what to have in your kit, download "Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit" from the Red Cross website.

Be Informed

For Americans, preparedness now means planning for man-made as well as natural disasters. The effects of man-made disasters caused by biological, chemical, explosive, radiological attacks or knowing what to do in each case can mitigate nuclear blasts.

Navy Medicine's Office of Homeland Security recommends the following websites to help you learn more about what to do in the event of a man-made disasters as well as personal and family emergency planning:

- Department of Homeland Security's Ready.gov, www.ready.gov.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency's Are you Ready?, www.fema.gov/areyouready/. Copies of the booklet, "Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness" are available through the FEMA Publications warehouse, 1 800 480-2520. Ask for FEMA publication H-34.

- American Red Cross, www.redcross.org.

-usn-